

“Jesus For Troubled Hearts”

Grace, mercy, and PEACE to you, from God our Father, and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Frank, and your entire family, the PEACE which Christ gives you today – may it comfort you in all your days. Amen.

“Let not your hearts be troubled” might sound insensitive, and out of place at a funeral. After all – in addition to the death of a loved one – there is much to trouble your hearts in these days.

Christians gather for funeral services in order to comfort those who mourn – and to give them hope. Kleenex and hugs are helpful, but only go so far. At a funeral we are forced to deal with the truth – the truth of death, and loss – the truth of sin, and the wages it earns, which is death. But even in the face of such things – we are not without hope – for we have a Savior, who is Jesus Christ, our Lord.

In our Bible reading, Jesus is dealing with the troubled hearts of His disciples. They are troubled because of what He has said to them. Gathered together in that upper room, they are mere hours from His arrest and eventual crucifixion. He, the Son of God, has stooped down and washed their feet – and when there were objections, He said – “If I do not wash you, you have no share with me.”

In the course of that evening, He says that one of them would betray Him. And He says to Peter – “Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow till you have denied me three times.” There is much to trouble those gathered in that upper room.

What troubles you? The most obvious is the death of Gloria. Whether she is your wife, mother, grandmother or friend – her death reminds you that you will also die someday.

Maybe it’s the fear of cancer, or arthritis, or some other ailment – will these things that afflicted Gloria also come to you someday?

Maybe you're troubled because you're not sure how you will go on. There's a huge hole in your life now. Frank, you've spent the past 66 years with your wife – and now your whole world has changed – how will you live without your Gloria?

For all in the family, Gloria's death just plain hurts. For the grandchildren this may be the first time you've had to deal with the death of a loved one. It hurts because Gloria was such a vital part of your life (if not, it wouldn't hurt so much). She is one you treasured – a gift to you from God – and now, you're left to deal with what sin does to God's "good" gifts.

Or, maybe you're troubled by the prospect of following in the ways of Judas and Peter. Afraid and troubled by the prospect of losing the hope which is yours, in Christ Jesus.

"Let not your hearts be troubled" may sound foolish in light of everything you are dealing with – but Christ's Word does what it says. His Word is powerful. God the Holy Spirit works through His Word to create a faith in you that believes what Jesus says to you today – pointing you in faith to Jesus – to calm your troubled heart.

And what does Jesus say to you? He doesn't just tell you to shape up, to feel better, to not be troubled – He tells you WHY you need not let your hearts be troubled. He gives you His remedy for your troubled heart.

"Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?" Don't be troubled that there is no vacancy for you in the Father's house. Don't be troubled that you might be disqualified for one reason or another. Jesus says, "I got this" – I am going to prepare a place FOR YOU – and that means YOU. His promise is for each and every one of you – no one is excluded.

"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also."

Jesus goes to His betrayal, arrest, suffering, crucifixion and death – that's where He is going. And by this work, He prepares a place for you in the Father's house.

He goes to shed His blood to pay the ransom that our sin demands. He goes to sacrifice His life, so that death does not have the final say – not for Gloria, and not for you. He goes through death and the grave, He is resurrected from death to life – to be the guarantee of your resurrection to life everlasting.

Jesus is going away – to suffer, die, be raised to life again, and to ascend into heaven – and His disciples will no longer see Him. But “I will come again” He promises. Just as He has come again to take Gloria to Himself so that she may be with Him in heaven – so His promise is for you – that He will come again for you.

“And you know the way to where I am going.” His words have been so comforting up to this point – but now, uncertainty creeps in. “Thomas said to Him, ‘Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?’”

Again, a clear Word of the Lord – one that is true – one that you can live by – one that calms the troubled heart. “Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.’” Jesus has prepared the way to the Father’s house. “It is finished.” In Jesus, heaven is yours.

But folks, there is no other way, no other truth, no other life. There is no other way to the Father except through faith in Jesus Christ. Without faith in Jesus, there is no way to heaven. But that saving faith is God’s gift to you – one that comes by hearing – hearing the Word of Christ.

Gloria was blessed (like Timothy in our Scripture reading) – to have a grandmother who made sure she heard the Word of the Lord – and Gloria would love nothing more than for all of you to be hearers of God’s Word – to hear and believe the Scriptures which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me.” Jesus has prepared a place for you in heaven by His suffering, death and resurrection. By His death and resurrection – your sin is forgiven, and you are reconciled to your heavenly Father. Your death is defeated, and eternal life is yours.

May that peace – which IS YOURS n Christ Jesus – comfort you this day, and in all your days – giving you a living hope, as you await the Lord’s return, to take you to your heavenly home. Amen.

The peace of God which passes all understanding, guard your hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus. Amen.